

## Abbas undecided on return to talks

BEIRUT (AFP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official Mahmoud Abbas, an architect of the self-rule deal with Israel, said Monday he was undecided on whether to head a new committee monitoring the autonomy talks. "The PLO Executive Committee and the Fatah central committee have asked me to resume my post as head of the monitoring committee. But so far I have not accepted," he told the London-based Arabic daily *Al Hayat*. "This issue has to be examined more closely. We have to define the policies, goals and methods of negotiations. This examination has not taken place in a detailed manner," he told the newspaper. Mr. Abbas signed for the PLO the 1993 declaration of principles on autonomy with Israel. He used to chair the committee monitoring the bilateral talks in Washington. But he later joined critics of the negotiations with Israel and has remained in Tunis since the self-rule authority was set up in Gaza last May — refusing to join PLO leader Yasser Arafat's cabinet.

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## King visits Hammad family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday visited the residence of the Hammad family to personally condole them on the death of Junia's Hammad, a former minister of culture and member of the Upper House of Parliament. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan delegated his private advisor Mohammad Al Saqqa to condole Al Tarabeen tribes over the death of Mr. Hammad.

## King Mubarak exchange views

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday telephoned Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and exchanged with him views on issues of common interest to Jordan and Egypt. King Hussein thanked Mr. Mubarak on the hospitality Egypt accorded to Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the delegation accompanying him on his visit to Egypt on Thursday and Friday to participate in the meetings of the Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee.

## King orders free treatment to Iraqi

AMMAN (AP) — Leading Iraqi sociologist Ali Al Wardi has been admitted to a Jordanian military hospital after King Hussein ordered free medical treatment for him, doctors said Monday. They said Mr. Wardi, 82, was suffering from prostate trouble. He is expected to remain at the King Hussein Medical Centre for some time, they said. Mr. Wardi is well-known in the Arab World for his writings on sociology and has written more than 30 books.

## King visits PM

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday evening visited the Prime Ministry and met with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker. King Hussein discussed with Sharif Zeid several issues and issued directives.

## Clinton to visit Russia, Ukraine

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton will visit Russia in May to attend commemorative events for the 50th anniversary of the Allied victory in Europe. White House spokesman Michael McCurry said Monday. "President Clinton will travel to Russia and Ukraine May 9 to 11," Mr. McCurry said. Mr. Clinton would meet with Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, Mr. McCurry said.

## Major to visit U.S. in April

WASHINGTON (AFP) — British Prime Minister John Major will pay a working visit to Washington in early April. White House spokesman Michel McCurry said Monday. "At the invitation of President (Bill) Clinton, British Prime Minister John Major will make an official working visit to Washington April 3 and 4," Mr. McCurry said. The two "look forward in discussions on a wide range of issues," Mr. McCurry said. News of the visit came after tension between the two countries over last week's visit to Washington by Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams.

## Balladur pitches for Jewish vote

PARIS (R) — Prime Minister and presidential candidate Edouard Balladur, in a clear bid for Jewish votes, was quoted on Monday as saying Franco-Israeli ties were the best in 25 years and protection for Jewish sites had never been better. "Never in the past 25 years have ties between France and Israel been better," Mr. Balladur was quoted as telling the Jewish weekly Tribune Juive.

## Israel studies 'separation' with urgency after attack

### Army blames Hamas for ambush, keeps Hebron under tight curfew

HEBRON, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — The Israeli army blamed the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, on Monday for an ambush on a packed bus in the occupied West Bank which killed two Israeli settlers and wounded five others.

As soldiers enforced the curfew, 2,000 Jewish settlers buried the two killed in the ambush while the Palestinians stayed indoors. Settlers from throughout the occupied West Bank fought back their anger at the attack and listened in silence to the funeral service outside Hebron's Al Ibrahimi Mosque in Feb. last year.

One of the victims worked with Rabbi Moshe Levinger, founder of the ultra-nationalist religious movement Gush Emunim and a figurehead for extremist settlers.

The military wing of Hamas, Izzedin Al Qassam, claimed the attack in slogans scrawled on the walls of Bethlehem University.

"Qassam's bullets will blaze until the total liberation of Palestine," one slogan read. Another said: "There is no other language than that of arms."

The attack — the bloodiest against West Bank settlers this year — was carried out by three or four Palestinians who sprayed the bus with machine-gum fire from a rooftop at a crossroads outside Hebron's Al Ibrahimi Mosque.

Only a handful of participants shouted "revenge" for Sunday's machine-gum attack on a bus travelling from Jerusalem to the settlement of Kiryat Arba, which also wounded five settlers.

Hundreds of police and soldiers lined the Hebron streets which were empty of Palestinians after the army clamped a curfew on the town.

The victims, Nahum Mass, 31, and 40-year-old Yehuda Partosh both lived near Hebron, where tension between Palestinians and settlers erupted in the massacre of at least 30 Muslim worshippers by a Kiryat Arba settler at

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# 2 Home & Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 1995

## Decisive Kabul battle likely to delay U.N. peace plan

**KABUL** (AP) — Now that his forces have taken control of Kabul and its suburbs for the first time since 1992, Afghanistan's president is likely to ignore a U.N. deadline for him to step down Tuesday.

The United Nations peace plan calls for President Burhanuddin Rabbani to hand over power to a multi-party governing council that's open to Afghanistan's 10 separate Islamic factions.

But Mr. Rabbani, whose term expired in December, has said he would not be bound by the U.N. timetable.

With the latest military victory, he is now in his strongest position since he came to power in December 1992, and many people expect him to stay in power.

On Sunday, Mr. Rabbani's army scored its biggest victory in the three-year-old civil war. It attacked before dawn and drove the rival Taliban militia from its main base just south of Kabul.

All opposition groups are now too far from the Afghan capital to wage sustained rocket attacks, and the beleaguered residents of Kabul are likely to enjoy relative calm for the first time in a long time if the government can hold its territorial gains.

More importantly, the Taliban appeared to have collapsed Sunday as quickly and dramatically as they had emerged.

In recent months, the group — mostly made up of militant religious students — had captured 10 provinces in

the south and east of Afghanistan and arrived on Kabul's outskirts in February.

However, they had met little resistance until they came up against the president's troops. And Sunday's fighting made it appear that their strength had been overestimated.

"Now they are out of rocket range for Kabul. This was our initial objective," Abdallah, a spokesman for the Defense Ministry who uses only one name, said Sunday.

Government troops began pounding Taliban positions at around 4 a.m. with mortars, heavy artillery, tanks and machine gun fire.

An hour after the barrage began, the Taliban soldiers fled their base in Charasyab, 25 kilometers south of Kabul, according to the Defense Ministry. The government forces also took strategic hills in the area that have been used by various opposition groups to fire rockets on Kabul.

About 150 Taliban soldiers were killed in Sunday's fighting, said Abdul Huda, an assistant to the government's top military commander, Ahmad Shah Masoud. Radio Kabul confirmed that death toll Monday and also reported that 200 Taliban were taken captive by the government forces.

Within hours of the Taliban defeat, hundreds of fresh government troops were travelling in trucks down the dusty road from Kabul to Charasyab to reinforce the newly captured positions.

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## Iran gets into party mood for 1374

**TEHRAN** (AP) — Iranians will welcome in the new year on Tuesday with festivities which date back centuries and have remained unchanged despite the 16-year-old Islamic revolution.

At 6:44 a.m. and 35 seconds exactly on Tuesday morning (just after 0200 GMT), Iran will enter the year 1374 according to a calendar mapped out by astro-nomers.

Unlike other Muslim countries which adopted the lunar calendar along with Islam, Iran kept its solar calendar inherited from Zoroastrianism, the religion of Persia before the arrival of Islam around 650 A.D.

The calendar starts from the year 622 A.D., when the Prophet Mohammad was exiled from Mecca to Medina.

New Year or "Nowruz" is the biggest celebration in Iran and a time for families to get together for several days of festivities, following strictly observed rituals handed down from the Zoroastrian

who ruled Persia 3,000 years ago.

It also marks the spring equinox and was long frowned upon by Iranian authorities for its pagan associations.

But this year for the first time, the government seems to have accepted it.

The usual warnings against "excesses" have disappeared and unprecedented efforts have been made to schedule entertainment — programmes on the radio and television.

An essential part of the new year is a tableau on a table or carpet made up of various items, without which no Iranian household would feel complete.

They include a mirror, a goldfish bowl, painted eggs and seven objects beginning with the letter "S" in Persian — vinegar, garlic, an apple, corn biscuit, germinating seeds, coins and herbs.

Completing the collection is the Koran, which has replaced the Zoroastrian equivalent, the Avesta.

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Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday inspects the Noor Al Hussein Salt Handicrafts Training Centre (photo by George Crystal)

## Queen chairs meeting of NHF executive committee

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday chaired the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) executive meeting at the NHF Salt Handicraft Training Centre.

The meeting reviewed the progress and the development of the Salt centre and discussed issues of concern arising from the expansion of the centre's activities and the increase in its annual number of applicants.

Queen Noor commended the centre on the services it is offering to the community, which include training some of the Ministry of Education's teachers in ceramics and textile production, replacing imported clay with the centre's locally produced clay and cooperating with the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and the Hassa Women's Club to train people for the clay production project at Hassa.

After the meeting, the Queen toured the weaving and ceramics divisions, the silk screening and production units, the Salt library, and the folklore museum. The Salt Handicrafts Training Centre was established by the NHF in April.

Over the past 10 years,

1987 in cooperation with the Salt Development Corporation (SDC) and the Italian government.

It is located in a wing of the SDC's Cultural Centre.

The Salt centre offers a free three-year training programme, for students who have finished 10th grade, in weaving, ceramics, silk screening, decoration and clay production as well as courses for the public and an in-service programme for trainees.

The centre expanded in 1991 to include a permanent showroom and two weaving and ceramics pilot production units.

New branches for training in jewellery, glass work and other handicrafts will be introduced in the near future.

The centre's mission is closely tied with the overall NHF comprehensive and integrated development approach: the centre utilises traditionally-rooted and locally available resources to preserve Jordan's national heritage and helps its graduates launch their income-generating schemes thus enhancing their standard of living and self-reliance.

Over the past 10 years,

Queen Noor has been encouraging the development of high-quality artisan centres in Jordan's villages and towns located near archaeological sites.

The NHF Salt centre aims to revive traditional trades and to market them, thereby enhancing the touristic attraction to the historic city of Salt, which is an important archaeological site dating back to the Iron Age.

In 1994, 75 people from Salt, Baqaa, Jerash, Zarqa, Irbid and Madaba enrolled in the three-year training programme, which can accommodate 90 students annually.

Queen Noor, accompanied by In'am Mufti, advisor to the Queen, was received by Anis Mouasher, member of the NHF Executive Committee and of the Salt Development Corporation, members of the NHF Executive Committee: Sami Gammoh, Bassem Saket and Subhi Ma'ani, Ja'far Shami, president of Salt Development Corporation, Eid Qatameh, governor of Balqa', Abdulla Hindawi, NHF acting director general, Najah Massar, project director of the NHF Salt Handicraft Centre.

Support committee appeals to U.S. vice president to oppose Russian action in Chechnya

By Cathy King  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Availing itself on the occasion of U.S. Vice President Al Gore's arrival Tuesday in the Kingdom, the Jordanian Committee for the Support of the People of the Independent Caucasian Chechen Republic (JCSCP) has appealed to Mr. Gore and the United States to more actively oppose Russian military action in Chechnya.

In a letter addressed to Mr. Gore, the JCSCP urged the United States to "press for the end to the war and for a peaceful settlement of the crisis rather than indirectly financing Russian actions by continuing U.S. economic development aid to Russia."

The statement, obtained by the Jordan Times, solicited by the U.S. to impress that Moscow lifts restrictions and hindrances on the delivery of humanitarian aid to Chechnya. In addition it called for a U.S. boycott of the May summit to be held in Moscow, as long as Russia maintains its "disproportionate and indiscriminate assault on Chechnya."

Mr. Gore's visit to the Middle East began Sunday in Egypt where he discussed a joint Egyptian-American programme to encourage Egypt's private sector. Mr. Gore should be here for two days starting today, but the U.S. embassy declined to reveal any further details of his visit.

The JCSCP has requested the U.S. embassy to arrange a meeting between representatives of the committee and the vice president to "discuss the humanitarian aspect of the crisis in Chechnya."

Russian military intervention in the breakaway Republic of Chechnya began on Dec. 11. Since then, and according to recent United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates, 410,000 people have become refugees as a result of the conflict.

Russian forces took the capital Grozny in late February and have been launching attacks on Chechen strongholds south of it, including helicopter bombing sorties on the southern mountainous region where Chechen separatists have set up bases for

guerrilla war.

Meanwhile, a statement issued earlier this month by the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva said that the Russian authorities were hindering the distribution of humanitarian relief in all parts of Chechnya.

In January, the first consignment of Jordanian aid was to be shipped by the ICRC to the Chechen Republic. According to an official at ICRC offices in Jordan, the shipment is still in Brussels.

"It is in the process of repackaging, but it will be sent to its final destination as soon as administrative procedures have been completed," the official told the Jordan Times yesterday.

Donations collected by the JCSCP and other charities included medicine, medical equipment and baby milk.

The letter to Mr. Gore and signed by JCSCP chairman Said Bino, also reassured the right of the Chechen people as a "distinct ethnic nation" to self-determination, underlining their legitimate claim to human rights.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### NOVEL RECITAL

★ Novel recital by novelist Raja' Abu Ghazaleh at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 6:00 p.m.

### NEWS

★ ABC News Highlights and McNeil-Lehrer News Hour at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

### EXHIBITIONS

Bani Hamida Mother's Day display at Bani Hamida House (8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.)

- ★ Exhibition of abstract art by "Alla" 'Ammoura and oil paintings by Salman 'Abbas at Orlifi Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of abstract art by Abder Bawab at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also displaying oil paintings by Mu'mira Al Tumasiya.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by several artists entitled "Faces" at the Balqa' Art Gallery, Fuheis.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Nazi Irtencelik at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of art by Rula Shukairy at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Iraqi artist Hana Mahalil at Ab'dad Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition by Syrian artist Marwan Qassab Bashi at Darat Al Funun. Also showing a permanent exhibition of contemporary Arab artists.

Eng. George Haddad  
Director General

## Jordan marks Karameh battle

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan today marks the 27th anniversary of Al Karameh Battle in which Jordanian forces defeated a dawn attack launched by Israel in the Jordan Valley area.

On March 21, 1968, Israeli troops, supported by armoured vehicles, combat planes and artillery, made incursions in the central Jordan Valley area.

The large-scale, three-pronged Israeli attack covered an area of 40-kilometres, stretching from the Prince Mohammad Bridge in the north to the Dead Sea in the south.

The attack was aimed at occupying the eastern heights of the Jordan Valley (the Balqa heights) in order to take control of the region.

It also aimed at destroying the morale of the people and armed forces and forcing them to flee.

The large number of troops and personnel which took part in the Israeli attack was clear evidence of the Jewish state's policy to enlarge its strategic depth towards the east.

Taking part in the battle on the Israeli side were two armoured brigades, one infantry and one paratroop unit, five artillery battalions, four squadrons of fighter planes and several helicopters, in addition to two com-

bat divisions.

Despite the large number of military personnel and the air and artillery cover, the battle turned out to be a complete defeat for the Israelis, who were forced to withdraw under the cover of night because of the fierce resistance by the Jordan Armed Forces.

Israeli losses during the battle were three times higher than the losses during the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

In a speech delivered by His Majesty King Hussein on the eve of March 21, 1968 after the battle was over, the King described Al Karameh as a glorious battle that will always be a source of pride to the nation.

"Al Karameh Battle, in all its dimensions, is a turning point in our lives," the King said. "It has violently shaken the myth of the Israeli superiority and proved in front of the world that our courageous soldiers and our sons have been able to achieve victory and protect our homeland from the avaricious invaders."

"Al Karameh had given the Arab Nation the opportunity to reevaluate itself in a way closer to the truth and to the reality," the King added.

National observances are expected to be held today throughout the Kingdom.



## Princess Basma in N.Y. for preparatory meetings

NEW YORK (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday arrived in New York to participate in preparatory meetings for the World Conference on Women which will be hosted by China later this year.

The preparatory meeting, which started Wednesday will conclude April 4.

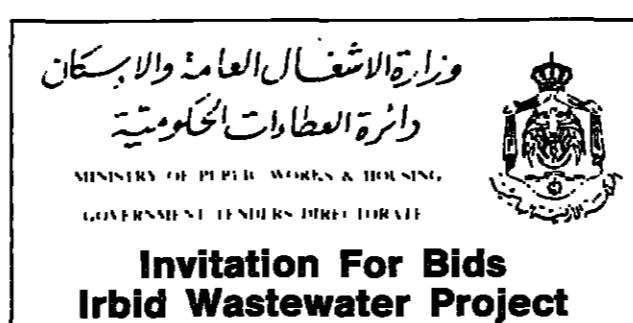
Princess Basma will take part in discussions on the role of women in various walks of life and issues which will be discussed at the Beijing conference to start in August.

In addition to poverty and education, the preparatory meetings will also discuss violence against women, armed conflicts, women's participation in the decision-making

process; their role in managing natural resources, protecting the environment and human rights as well as the role of the mass media in supporting women's positive contributions in their societies.

In the earlier sessions of the preparatory committee, the participants called for addressing violence against women, with the representative of Switzerland stressing the need to tackle some traditions and norms encouraging violence against women.

Some of the participants expressed their belief that the major problem facing women around the world was poverty.



## Invitation For Bids Irbid Wastewater Project (62/95 Central)

1. The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation through the Ministry of Public Works and Housing/Government Tenders Directorate, (G.T.D.) invites experienced foreign contractors from countries which meet the eligibility criteria of the European Investment Bank and local contractors who have been prequalified by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing as first of second Grade in Water and Sewerage, or a joint venture between eligible foreign and local contractors to submit their offers for the supply, delivery and construction of Irbid Wastewater Project. Foreign contractors are strongly encouraged to joint venture or associate with the above graded local contractors.
2. The project consists of the supply and installation of about 22.5 km of concrete pipes for wastewater collection system ranging in diameter from 150mm to 200mm.
3. Tender documents are available and may be purchased from the Government Tenders Directorate in Amman: P.O.Box 1220 Tel. (+) 962 6 607 481, Fax (+) 962 6 606 751.
4. The non-refundable fee for each set of tender documents will be JD 200.
5. The latest date for the purchase of tender documents by the eligible bidders is April 6th, 1995.
6. Bids are due not later than 1300 hours, Jordan local time, on Saturday, April 15th, 1995 to the office of the Government Tenders Directorate.

## Body of Spanish tourist to be flown home today

By Rana Hussein

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The body of a Spanish tourist, who Friday died in an accident in Petra, will be flown to Spain today, a source at the Spanish embassy said Monday.

The accident victim, a 47-year-old woman on a tour with a group of about 30 other Spanish tourists, was on her way to the High Place of Sacrifice in Petra when a rock fell from above her and hit the back of her head, police confirmed Monday.

"Sheep grazing in that area caused a rock to fall, and it struck the woman in the back of the head," police said.

Minister of Tourism Abdul Ilah Khatib Monday described the accident as "tragic" and said that with the increasing numbers of tourists to Petra, author-

ities have moved to provide adequate medical services to protect visitors to the area.

"A mobile health clinic from the Civil Defence Department is going to be despatched to Petra to provide 24-hour emergency care services in Petra proper."

According to Mr. Khatib, doctors to man the clinic will be provided by the Ministry of Health.

The minister said that Friday's accident involving the Spanish tourist was extraordinary. He added that earlier minor incidents had already prompted the various concerned ministries to take steps to protect visitors to Petra.

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## Nerve-gas attack on Tokyo subway kills 6, hurts thousands

TOKYO (AP) — One of the world's busiest subway systems turned into a deathtrap for unsuspecting commuters Monday when nerve gas spewed through cars and stations at the height of morning rush hour, killing six and injuring thousands. Authorities suspected terrorism.

All over central Tokyo, subway passengers fainted, vomited and went into convulsions as the poisonous fumes spread. Some of those stricken foamed at the mouth and bled from the nose, witnesses said.

Police said the toxic agent was believed to be the nerve gas Sarin, which can be fatal even in small doses when absorbed through the skin or inhaled. Japanese press reports cited authorities as saying the substance was deliberately planted in parcels in at least five subway cars on three train lines.

Sarin was blamed for seven

mysterious deaths last June in the central Japan town of Matsumoto. The source of the gas was never identified, and there were no arrests.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility in Monday's attack, which would be one of Japan's worst incidents of terrorism ever.

Authorities refused to discuss suspects — either individuals or groups — and would not say whether they included Aum Shinri Kyo, a religious cult that has been previously accused of making Sarin.

The group which has been linked by press reports to several unsolved kidnappings denied any involvement in Monday's attack and threatened in a statement to sue anyone who suggested there was any link.

Two odd incidents earlier this month could yield clues. On March 15, three myster-

ious attack cases were discovered at a Tokyo subway station, each containing three tanks with an unknown liquid, small motorised fans, a vent, and a battery. One was giving off a vapor.

Ten days before that, 19 people were taken to hospitals after they inhaled mysterious fumes in a train car in Yokohama and complained of eye and respiratory pain. The source of the fumes was not found.

Within hours of Monday's attack, hospitals in central Tokyo were inundated, admitting more than 1,000 patients for treatment or observation. Doctors and nurses rushed frantically to administer CPR, give oxygen and hook up intravenous drips.

More than a dozen people were reported in critical condition. Officials estimated that thousands of others suffered lesser symptoms, including coughing and dizziness and did not obtain treatment.

"When I got to the hospital, I couldn't move my hands enough to write my name and I could barely speak," said commuter Masashi Ito.

The attack struck at a cherished national institution, Tokyo's clean and efficient subway network. Running with the precision of Swiss watches, the trains carry 2.7 billion passengers a year, about twice as many as the New York subway system.

The attack also came as Japan still was recovering from the devastating Jan. 17 earthquake in the port city of Kobe that killed nearly 5,500 people.

For many, the sight of hundreds of ordinary people struck down on their way to work rekindled fears that their country is not the safe, orderly place they had always considered it to be.

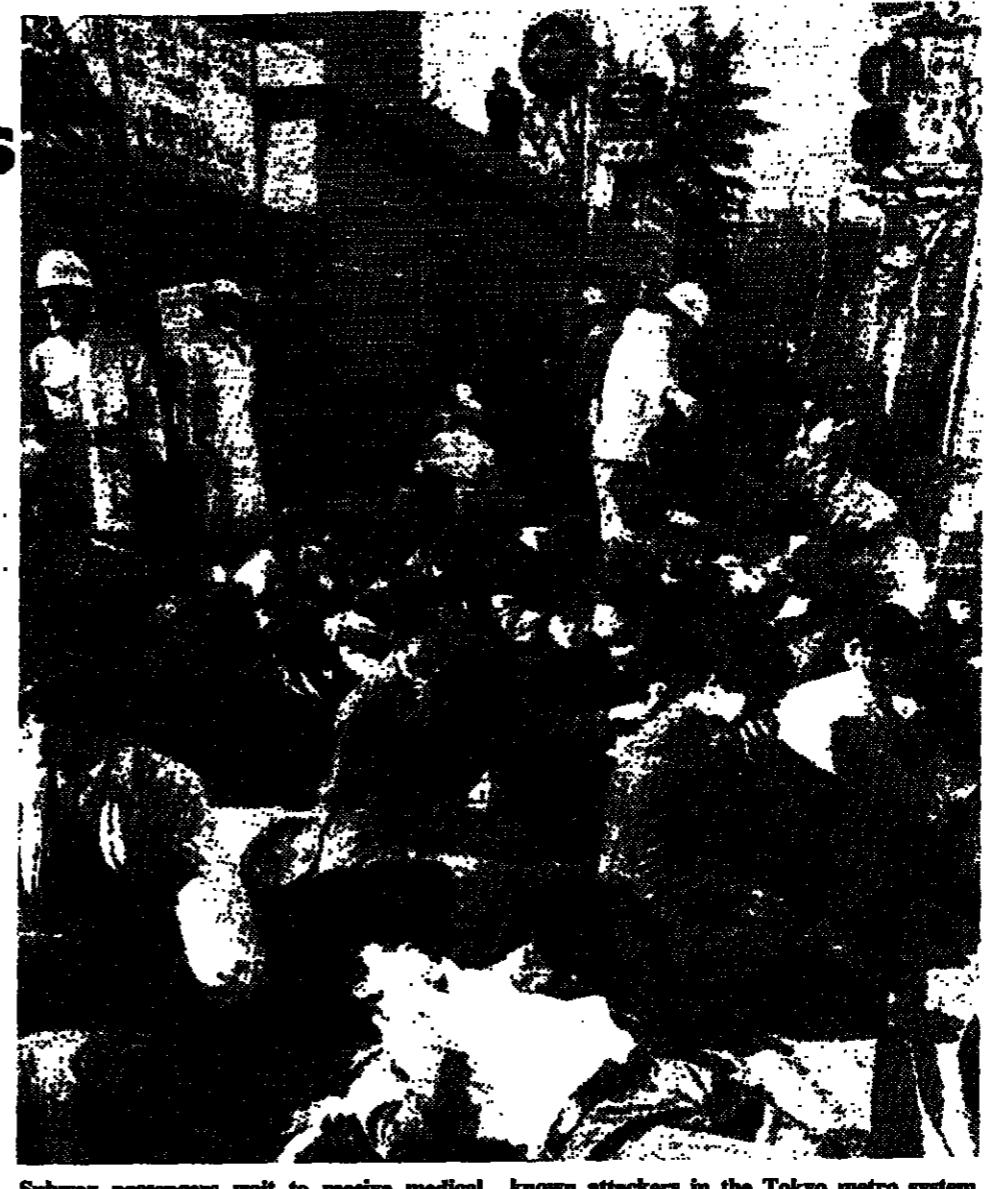
"Japan has turned into a scary country," said taxi driver Koichi Horie. "We can't allow crimes like this."

The mood in the capital was one of crisis. Television carried non-stop coverage, and newspapers rushed into print with special editions. "Violent poison terrorism in subways," read a banner headline in the Yomiuri, Japan's largest circulation newspaper.

However, the stock market was unshaken. Analysts said dealers closely followed the situation, but prices finished only moderately lower in light trading.

Japanese bureaucrats and government officials — who were sharply criticised in the wake of the earthquake for slowness and ineptitude — acted swiftly.

Workers clad in protective gear quickly poured into stations. Troops were called out, including a special anti-



Subway passengers wait to receive medical attention Monday after inhaling a lethal nerve gas during rush hour killing six people and injuring thousands (AFP photo)



Office workers watch over their colleague at a subway station Monday following the emission of a poisonous gas in the Tokyo Metro system which has left six people dead and hundreds hospitalised (AFP photo)

## Shan rebels attack Burmese town

BANGKOK (R) — Fighters loyal to Burma's opium warlord Khun Sa raided a town in northeastern Burma early Monday and clashes raged on through the morning.

The raid was the latest in a series of guerrilla attacks aimed at defeating a government army offensive against the separatist rebels.

Some 60 fighters from Khun Sa's Mong Tai Army (MTA) staged the early-morning raid on a Burmese army barracks and military guest houses in Tachilek, a bustling border town opposite the Thai town of Mae Sai, rebel sources and Thai officials on the border said.

The rebels, firing rocket-propelled grenades and automatic rifles, attacked for about one hour before withdrawing, one MTA official said.

But several pockets of guerrillas were apparently trapped in the town and fighting continued throughout Monday morning, Thai officials in Mae Sai said.

Thai Television showed pictures of MTA fighters and Burmese government troops exchanging small arms fire on the Burmese bank of the Nam Sai River which separates the two countries.

Several buildings in the town were set ablaze by grenades and rockets fired by Burmese troops, the guerrilla official said.

Thai authorities said more than 40 guerrillas had crossed into Thailand after the initial attacks where they were seized along with their weapons.

Hundreds of Burmese civilians had also crossed the border river into Thailand where they were taking refuge at three Buddhist temples, Thai authorities said.

Burmese troops kept up an artillery barrage in the direction of the retreating rebels throughout the morning.

Both Thai and guerrilla sources said casualties on both sides were not yet known.

Earlier Monday Thailand closed the border crossing to Tachilek where hundreds of tourists, both Thai and foreign, go sightseeing and shopping every day.

Monday's attack was the latest in a state of guerrilla warfare in the region.

Khun Sa, who says he only trades opium in his area of control in the opium-growing Golden Triangle region, has been indicted in the United States on narcotics-trafficking charges.

## Oscar fever gives big boost

LOS ANGELES (R) — The Academy Award nominations have generated a box-office bonanza for a handful of smaller films in recent weeks, and the movies that won Hollywood's highest honours next Monday can expect to reap even richer rewards.

A prime example of Oscar fever is *The Madness of King George*, a lush, 18th century comedy-drama that picked up four nominations, including best actor for Nigel Hawthorne and best actress for Helen Mirren.

The film, a Samuel Goldwyn Co. release that had grossed only \$3.1 million the day before the nominations were announced Feb. 14, has seen its box-office take soar to more than \$9.5 million.

Samuel Goldwyn President Meyer Gottlieb said it's all a matter of giving broader "visibility" to a film that otherwise would have appealed only to a small art-house audience.

"What the Academy Award nominations... allow us to do is publicise that this is a performance worthy of seeing and a talent that is a new discovery," Gottlieb said.

He estimated that an Oscar win in a major category could boost the film to nearly \$30 million in ticket sales.

"We're dealing with (a

lead) actor that no one's ever seen on the screen before," Gottlieb said. "We don't have Tom Hanks."

On the other hand, *Forrest Gump*, which does have Tom Hanks, won the greatest number of Oscar nominations this year but has felt only a modest boost at the box office.

*Forrest Gump*, which took 13 nominations including best picture, best director and best actor, as of March 13 had grossed \$312 million, about an \$8 million increase over the prior month but only a small percentage increase in its total.

Similarly, *Pulp Fiction*, a violent dark comedy from Miramax Films which won seven nominations, has seen its box office total rise to \$88.7 million from \$76.1 million in the four weeks since the nominations were announced.

"Both films had seen the best of their theatrical runs prior to the nominations," said Jeffrey Liss, managing director and entertainment industry analyst at Seider Cos.

But the resulting highly publicised outcry against the Oscar snub has helped turn *Hooper Dreams* into one of the highest-grossing documentaries of all time.

*Hooper Dreams* has taken in \$6.3 million, up from \$3.9 million a month ago, and is expected to surpass the record \$6.7 million of *Roger And Me*.

"I think what you've got in the case of *Hooper Dreams* is the first time that not getting nominated has helped a film," said Liz Manne, senior vice president of marketing for Fine Line Features, the film's distributor.

expected success on Oscar night.

But while Oscar nominations are so highly coveted that studios often synchronise their film releases for maximum exposure, the failure of one critically acclaimed film to pick up a major nomination has also paid off handsomely this year.

*Hooper Dreams*, a riveting documentary about two inner-city teenagers with dreams of pro basketball stardom, had been plugged as a long-shot for a best picture nomination but was considered a shoo-in for a best documentary nomination.

The film ended up receiving only one minor nomination — for best editing.

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## Russian general calls for NATO to be dissolved

BONN (AFP) — The chief of the Russian General Staff, in an interview published Monday, called for the "immediate dissolution" of NATO, saying the end of the cold war meant the Western military alliance was no longer needed.

In the interview with the German newspaper *Die Welt*, Lieutenant General Mikhail Kolesnikov said Russian military leaders supported President Boris Yeltsin's opposition to NATO.

He said: "The existence of the alliance was undoubtedly important for the West during the cold war, but it

doesn't make sense now."

He also criticised the extent of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe's treaty on conventional disarmament, saying Russia "is our house and we have to be able to decide where and how to move the furniture around."

Calling for a "drastic reduction in nuclear arsenals," he said the Russian general staff was working on the concept of a START-III accord, he said, adding that "operational decisions are in the hands of local commanders."

In his interview in Moscow with the German daily and four other foreign papers, he denied claims that the general staff had lost influence since the conflict began, or that military leaders did not

turning to the war in

the full-length film *Right Of Asylum*.

But most pedestrians appeared remarkably calm, obeying police orders to take detours and stay away from station entrances and exists.

The attack snarled Tokyo's already slow-moving rush-hour traffic, and closures were expected to cause major transport problems in coming days. Officials did not know how long it would be before the capital's busy Hibiya Line and parts of the Marunouchi Line would reopen.

Emergency vehicles raced to stations, sirens screaming, and helicopters buzzed overhead. At hard-hit Tsukiji Station in central Tokyo, a nearby temple was pressed into service as a first-aid centre.

Metropolitan Police said the case was being treated as a murder investigation, and authorities ordered unspecified steps to beef up security on transport systems.

As Monday's drama unfolded, so did chaotic scenes on major Tokyo thoroughfares. People overcome by the gas were carried out to the sidewalk. Others staggered out on their own, gasping.

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## Queen decorates Mandela, addresses S. African parliament

CAPE TOWN (AFP) — Queen Elizabeth II Monday bestowed Britain's top royal honour on President Nelson Mandela and praised South Africa's transition to democracy, at the start of her first state visit here.

In a speech to a joint sitting of the first post-apartheid parliament, the queen described the negotiating process and last April's all-race elections to end more than 350 years of white rule in this country as "little short of a miracle."

The queen also referred to watching her father, King George VI, open parliament in 1947, saying the memories of that tour of South Africa 48 years ago have remained with her.

"I have wanted to return to this magnificent country," the queen said. "That wish has never deserted me through half a century during which you have seen turmoil and tragedy."

The queen also announced that Mr. Mandela would visit Britain next year, but did not give a firm date for the trip. It would be his first to Britain since he became South Africa's first democratically elected president.

"Next year, I look forward to welcoming you, Mr. President, on the first ever state visit to Britain by a South African head of state," the queen said.

"You (Mandela) are, of course, well versed in making history but I hope that, even for you, that will be an important milestone," she said.

The queen, dressed in a blue-grey two-piece outfit with matching hat, told the joint session of the National Assembly and Senate that South Africa's "spirit of reconciliation is a shining example to the world."

Mr. Mandela, who earlier received the Royal Order of Merit, and Deputy President F.W. De Klerk, a former president, were also hailed by the queen.

"They typify the new South Africa, which is showing that, with far-sighted, able leadership, willingness to compromise, and patient determination in the quest for peace, it is possible to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable," the queen said.

One notable absence from the parliament, where the queen received a standing ovation, was that of Mr. Mandela's estranged wife, Winnie.

Before the address to parliament, the two leaders exchanged honours, with the queen awarding Mr. Mandela the Order of Merit and receiving the Order of Good Hope in return.

"Your Majesty, this is a high honour indeed," Mr. Mandela said as he received the award at a brief ceremony on the steps of Tuynhuys, the president's offices in the Cape Town parliamentary complex.

Mr. Mandela told the queen that the Order of Good Hope was the "highest, highest honour that we can give."

Before the queen arrived at parliament, a small and brief demonstration occurred outside the gates when a group of about 20 black schoolchildren shouted: "We want food!" before running off down a side street; police did not intervene.

The queen arrived to a warm welcome in sunny but windy weather at Cape Town's Victoria and Albert Waterfront.

She stepped off the Royal Yacht Britannia to a 21-gun salute, accompanied by Prince Philip and Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and was greeted by Mr. Mandela and his official companion for the day, Rosalind Mitterra, described by presidential officials as "a close relative."

After a Royal Salute and a flyover by South African Air Force planes trailing red, white and blue smoke, she inspected a ceremonial guard and was presented to cabinet members.

Scenes of small craft, at least one bearing a hand-painted sign that read "Welcome Maan," braved strong southerly winds to accompany the yacht into the harbour where more than 5,000 eager royal watchers, most of them white, lined the dockfront.



The chairman of the Finnish Social Democratic Party Paavo Lipponen is all smiles as he celebrates his party's victory in the Finnish general elections at the party's headquarters in Helsinki (AFP photo)

## New Finnish government may take weeks after opposition's elections win

HELSINKI (R) — The opposition Social Democrats, victorious in Finland's general election, said Monday they would seek to form a broad-based coalition government in negotiations that could last for weeks.

The difficult question will be the composition of the government and its programme," said Paavo Lipponen, the party's 53-year-old leader. "A broad-based coalition and a strong government are needed. We do not exclude any option."

With 63 seats in the 200-seat parliament, the Social Democrats gained 15 seats from the 1991 election and turned in its best performance since World War II to become the largest party. But it did not win enough votes to rule on its own.

Mr. Lipponen, speaking on

Finnish radio after it was clear his party had won Sunday's election, said a new government would take weeks to arrange but should be formed before May 1.

He is widely expected to replace Esko Aho, 40, of the Agrarian-based Centre Party, as prime minister of the recession-hit Nordic nation of five million.

"Lipponen is the obvious nominee to try to bring together a new majority government," said the respected daily *Helsingin Sanomat*.

President Martti Ahtisaari, who will eventually appoint the next government, it expected to give an indication about the shape of the next government at a news conference.

Mr. Lipponen, who campaigned on the need to curb a 20 per cent unemployment

rate, said the result showed a wish for change.

Though there was a clear shift to the left in the election, Lipponen is likely to seek support from at least one of the two big parties in the defeated centre-right coalition, the Centre Party or the Conservative Party.

With 44 and 39 parliamentary seats respectively, both the Centre Party and the Conservatives lost in political influence but remained the second- and third-largest parties.

The three big parties, including the Social Democrats, have all pledged to save further in state spending to stabilise national debt but they differ on what kind of expenditure to cut. Financial markets reacted calmly to the results.

## Minsk Group postpones Karabakh talks

VIENNA (AFP) — International mediators Monday postponed peace negotiations due to start in Stockholm on the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, saying conditions were not right for talks.

The 12-nation Minsk Group, appointed by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to find a solution to the dispute, had put back the talks, due to last from March 20-24, with regret.

Sources at the organisation's Vienna headquarters said they had been forced to postpone the talks because Azerbaijan refused to recognise the delegation from Nagorno-Karabakh.

The co-chairmanship deplores that it has found it necessary to take this decision at a time when a ceasefire has been in effect in the region for 10 months and the process in search of a stable peace consequently should be intensified," the OSCE said.

At least 20,000 people have died in seven years of fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh, a region of Azerbaijan with a majority of Armenian population, where a fragile ceasefire is still holding.

Security forces Saturday put at 38 the official death toll from the failed uprising, including six civilians, and said 58 people were wounded.

Anglo-U.S. tension over Adams visit persists despite Clinton's phone

LONDON (AFP) — Anglo-American tension over Northern Ireland persisted outside the gates when a group of about 20 black schoolchildren shouted: "We want food!" before running off down a side street; police did not intervene.

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After a Royal Salute and a flyover by South African Air Force planes trailing red, white and blue smoke, she inspected a ceremonial guard and was presented to cabinet members.

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ed. Unofficial sources say the final toll could reach 100 dead.

Mr. Aliyev said: "Those forces which tried to change the situation in Azerbaijan are still around, operating inside and outside the country."

Attorney General Eldar Kasanov said people were killed when soldiers stormed the OPON barracks on the outskirts of Baku. The OPON leader, Rovshan Dzhavadov, was one of the dead.

Mr. Kasanov told Interfax 362 people had been arrested, although many of the rebels had managed to escape, among them Mr. Dzhavadov's brother Makhid. He also spoke of the presence of "traitors" in the security forces.

An opposition deputy, Eskender Gamidov, who served as interior minister under the deposed pro-Turkish President Abulfaz Elchibey, was among those arrested on suspicion of involvement in the revolt.

Another victim of the violence was Adil Bumayev, 36, a cameraman for the British news agency Reuters, who was killed while filming the storming of the rebel police compound, according to the government.

Mr. Clinton used the occasion to remind Mr. Major he would be in Moscow and not in Britain for VE-Day celebrations May 6-7, but would be sending Vice President Al Gore in his stead.

Sources close to Mr. Major said he was fuming over the way Mr. Clinton had dismissed Britain's simple request to wait for a positive IRA step towards weapons decommissioning before welcoming Mr. Adams as a political leader.

"The Americans treated Major in a way that none other of his European partners would have done," said a European diplomat who asked not to be named.

White House sources sought to put an upbeat spin on the phone conversation, calling it "Positive and friendly."

Downing Street said Mr. Clinton had agreed on the need for "strict accounting for funds raised by Sinn Fein in the United States."

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Downing Street said Mr. Clinton had concerns over the eventual use of money that Mr. Adams was raising in the United States, pointing to "a long history of funds raised in the United States being used to support the IRA's activities."

He added that "there is a widespread expectation that the IRA will go ahead soon to the president he was

refused to take, the president he was

## Russian offensive halted in Chechenya; jets continue attacks

SHALI, Russia (AFP) — Chechen fighters managed to halt a major Russian push into the southeast of the secessionist Caucasus republic, as Russian aircraft kept up the pressure Monday, firing rockets at several towns, Chechen officials and military officers said.

The TASS report Monday quoted army officials at Mozdok headquarters as saying the rebels, who have been battling Russian forces since Dec. 11, now controlled only a seven-kilometre strip of land up to the edge of the capital.

They said Russian forces occupied nearly the whole valley south of Grozny and the town of Gunni.

TASS said Russian forces sustained no casualties in the clashes Monday. It gave no estimates for Chechen losses.

Russian forces, who are trying to crush resistance after moving into the north Caucasus territory to end a bid for independence, took Grozny in February after fierce fighting that has devastated the city.

The Russians say they have lost more than 1,200 men in the fighting. Russia's Human Rights Commission said last month that as many as 24,000 civilians were killed in Grozny alone in a two-month spell.

Meanwhile Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev headed to the Caucasus Republics of Georgia and Armenia Monday for a three-day visit aimed at inspecting Russian troops stationed in both countries.

Gen. Grachev was sche-

duled to meet with Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze and on Tuesday is to visit two Russian military bases in the country.

Mr. Grachev will then head Wednesday to Armenia where authorities recently signed a military accord calling for Russia to maintain a military base in the northern town of Gunni.

He is also expected to discuss joint military manoeuvres scheduled between both countries on March 29.

His office said Wednesday that he may decide to continue on to Tajikistan Thursday where 15,000 Russian soldiers are stationed along the border with Afghanistan, where Islamic rebels often stage cross-border attacks.



An old Chechen woman returns to destroyed gear up for the decisive battle for the town, Grozny, carrying her belongings. While Grozny is quiet, the Russian troops near Argun are

gearing up for the decisive battle for the town, one of the bastions of the separatist Chechen forces (AFP photo)

## Russian minister says Crimea is Ukraine's affair

KIEV (R) — A senior Russian minister arrived in Ukraine to iron out final details of a friendship pact and said Kiev's constitutional row with separatists in Crimea would have no effect on ties between the two countries.

"Internal political events in Ukraine are Ukraine's business," First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets told reporters after arriving at Kiev Airport.

Crimea, an autonomous region within Ukraine, and the disputed Black Sea Fleet based there are among the

remaining obstacles to conclusion of the friendship pact, first planned for last September.

The talks opened three days after Ukraine's parliament clamped down on Crimea's pro-Russian authorities.

"As president I have been elected by the people of Crimea. No resolution by the Ukrainian parliament can change that."

About two-thirds of Crimea's 2.7 million residents are ethnic Russians and since the collapse of Soviet power, the peninsula's leaders have done little to conceal their

ambitions to restore Russia's rule over the region.

But Russian leaders, keenly aware of Western condemnation of Moscow's own bloody campaign against separatism in Chechenya, are clearly unwilling to become involved in the Crimea issue.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Hennadi Udroenko told reporters Mr. Kuchma has spoken by telephone to Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. He said Moscow "views this issue with understanding."

Meanwhile Azerbaijan President Geydar Aliyev charged unnamed "foreign special services" with involvement in the rebellion by an elite police forces unit which ended in bloody violence.

Mr. Aliyev, quoted by Russian news agency Interfax in an interview Sunday in the capital Baku, did not specify to which foreign power he was allying.

However, he said a Turkish citizen, an "adviser" to Azerbaijan's parliament, could have been involved in the rebellion by the OPON police unit that was put down Friday.

Security forces Saturday put at 38 the official death toll from the failed uprising, including six civilians, and said 58 people were wounded.

Mr. Kasanov told Interfax 362 people had been arrested, although many of the rebels had managed to escape, among them Mr. Dzhavadov's brother Makhid. He also spoke of the presence of "traitors" in the security forces.

An opposition deputy, Eskender Gamidov, who served as interior minister under the deposed pro-Turkish President Abulfaz Elchibey, was among those arrested on suspicion of involvement in the revolt.

Another victim of the violence was Adil Bumayev, 36, a cameraman for the British news agency Reuters, who was killed while filming the storming of the rebel police compound, according to the government.

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## Features



JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 1995

PRIVOLNOYE — It was with a tinge of pride that, on March 11, 1985, Alexander Yakovenko heard the thrilling news from Moscow on his radio — an antique contraption bulkier than a suitcase. His old boyhood friend, the village overachiever with whom he spent his teenage summers harvesting grain on a clunking Stalini-6 combine, had just been named General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR.

Not only had Mr. Yakovenko once sat alongside the newly appointed master of the world's second superpower, he could claim a modest role in his making. For it was thanks to their Stalinoite teamwork aboard the combine harvester that, in the June 20, 1948 issue of the local newspaper, *The Road to Ulyanovsk*, the man who would sow the seeds of perestroika and reap a whirlwind of change first hit the headlines: "Comrade Gorbachev is Ready to Harvest."

Today, 10 years after the Politburo declared Mikhail Gorbachev ready to govern the Soviet Union, Mr. Yakovenko, now 66 and retired from his job on the local collective farm on a monthly pension — rarely paid — of about £15. "Somehow it just didn't work out." The old radio on which he once followed Mr. Gorbachev's career boomed away in the next room. Above the throb of heavy metal rock music, Mr. Yakovenko explained why his friend's good intentions had gone away. "This *glasnost* and democracy business were a crime. They may have killed off perestroika."

Along a nearby main road to the regional capital, Stavropol, rambled forbidding reminders of the chaos many Russians see as the principal results of the past decade — convoys of military trucks emblazoned with red crosses heading south to the war in neighbouring Chechnya.

Never mind that Mr. Gorbachev opposed the war and has been out of office since 1991, there is a sense that he somehow set the whole infernal machine in motion: "He should have done things differently. Something needed to be done but not like this," said Tatjana Pavlenko, a 55-year-old farmer. "He should have thought about things a bit more. He did it all without really thinking."

10 years ago, a surge of pride overtook Mikhail Gorbachev's village when he was named general secretary of the USSR. These days, his image is somewhat tarnished. Andrew Higgins reports

**FALLING STARS:** Gorbachev with Margaret Thatcher in 1989; at President Chernenko's funeral in 1985; that fateful flight back from the Crimea in August, 1991; on the phone with President Bush minutes before announcing his resignation in December, 1991



Mr. Gorbachev, whose first move upon coming to office was a frenzied campaign against drunkenness, would himself be less pleased with the most visible signs of change in his home village — a huge selection of booze. A new shop off the main square stocks Black Death Vodka and Bulgarian cognac; the state store next door offers stale biscuits and shelf after shelf of fortified wine; two private kiosks on Proletariat Street sell ice-cream, imported chocolate and more alcohol.

Built on the banks of a muddy river, the Yegorlyk, the village of Privolnoye sits on some of the richest land in Russia, the gently rolling steppes of the Stavropol region. For all the grumbling, it still presents a tidy, even prosperous face, the shutters of its gingerbread houses freshly painted, each home surrounded by a neat wooden fence. Unlike many Russian villages, it has an asphalt road and its own telephone exchange.

Nor is the village swamped by the crime that has so alienated urban Rus-

sians: the most recent act of lawlessness was the theft of two turkeys.

According to Vasily Chertov, head of the village administration, the real problem is less present misery than fear for the future and resentment that staff at a gas compressor station just outside the village should earn at least five times more than peasants on the collective farm. "We have no idea anymore where we are going or how we will get there. It was easy before. We were building Communism. No one

had to think. Now we have no ideology."

An educated man who used to work as a vet on the collective farm, Mr. Chertov has a soft spot for Mr. Gorbachev but sees no hope of a political comeback for the village's most celebrated son: "He doesn't stand a chance."

A far more promising, albeit problematic — he died in 1982 — candidate for a comeback would be Leonid Brezhnev: "Brezhnev would definitely win. Here it would be 100 per cent for Brezhnev. There is

no question at all."

In some way, though, little has changed since Mr. Gorbachev left here in 1950 to go to university in Moscow. The centre of village life is still the Sverdlov Collective Farm — recently renamed a Joint-Stock Agricultural Enterprise Ltd but still run much as before from a wooden building flanked by concrete busts of Lenin and Marx. The land has been divided up on paper into 1,700 individual plots but only 34 out of more than 4,000 villagers have broken with the collective farm to set up on their own. The farm's director is Nikolai Brizhakin, a jowly veteran communist with huge ham hands, a stubby tie and borscht stains on his polyester shirt.

"Reform has given practically nothing to the peasants," he complained, launching into a long tirade against Moscow's neglect of the countryside.

Equally distressed is Mr. Gorbachev's old German teacher, the ethnic German woman who first introduced the future leader of the Communist Party to the

## Assad demands 'balanced peace'

(Continued from page 1)

lier that he was in Damascus to familiarise himself with Syria's views on the peace effort.

"We in Europe in general, and in Germany in particular, are greatly interested in the positive developments in the peace process," Mr. Rau said.

Diplomatic sources said that Mr. Rau's visit signalled Germany's growing interest in playing a bigger role in the Middle East.

Syria and other Arab states have long encouraged Europe to take a higher profile in the process, seeking to counter U.S. support for Israel.

Mr. Assad also met Monday with Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouez to discuss the peace process and

other regional issues.

Syria is the dominant power in Lebanon, whose negotiations with Israel have also been stalled since February 1994.

SANA said that Mr. Bouez had carried a message from Lebanese President Elias Hrawi for Mr. Assad. It did not disclose the contents.

Mr. Bouez, who arrived by road from Beirut, also met his Syrian counterpart, Farouk Al Sharaf. He said they discussed developments in the Middle East in light of Mr. Christopher's tour of the region last week.

He said that Lebanon was "mobilising its diplomacy and international relations to explain the brutality of Israel's aggression on Lebanon."

## Jordan rejects Israeli charges

(Continued from page 1)

daily quota of 600 across that crossing was completed.

The Jerusalem Post quoted tour operators as saying that many of those turned back had visas issued by Jordanian authorities and some of the tourists threatened to sue the agencies.

But, Mr. Khatib said, Israeli tour operators did not take into consideration that the visas specified the period of visit and stipulated that tourists should cross into the country on the same date as mentioned in the permit rather than trying to use the permit on any day during the specified period.

Jordan is now issuing visas specifying the date of entry and the period of visit in order to preempt Israeli tour operators from issuing the permit, he

## Israel debates separation

(Continued from page 1)

the talks would continue. A leading dove in Mr. Rabin's government, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, said Monday it was only a matter of time until Jewish settlements in the West Bank would be uprooted.

"It is known that the settlements and of course that in the centre of Hebron will meet their fate, and before much more time will pass..." Mr. Sarid told Israel TV.

However, Deputy Defence Minister Mordechai Gur said the government would push for the "right" of Jews to remain in Hebron under a final peace agreement with the Palestinians.

Sunday night's shooting ambush lent new intensity to a debate in Israel over plans to separate between Israel and the West Bank with the help of fences, beefed-up army patrols, new checkpoints and bomb-sniffing dogs.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal on Monday presented the proposal to a parliamentary committee and said it was the only way to foil attacks by Palestinian militants inside Israel. Mr. Shahal said he would submit the plan to the government in two weeks for approval.

Right-wing politicians, however, said this would turn the 140,000 Jews in the West Bank into targets for militants.

The minister said it was not possible for Jordan to increase the number, given that it did not even have the properly equipped buses that meet the requirements of tourism standards to transport the visitors. "It's not enough to put up a fence. The question is who controls security on the other side of the fence," said opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu. "If it's Hamas or the PLO, then we will have... an explosion of terrorism."

Mr. Shahal said his plan to separate Palestinians and Israelis ended right-wing dreams of annexing occupied

Arab lands.

"It has a political meaning," Mr. Shahal told reporters after presenting the plan for creating a "security area" between Israel and the West Bank to parliament's interior committee.

Mr. Rabin reviewed the plan on Friday. It will be brought to the cabinet for debate in two weeks. The government first adopted the idea of separation in January after a suicide bomb killed 21 Israelis.

"It is defining that there are two entities. This is the reason why those who had a policy of annexation, are dreaming of a greater Israel, object to this idea. They oppose it because this will mean this is a dream and it cannot be realised."

But Mr. Shahal, striking a different tone to comments on Saturday by Mr. Sarid, denied his plan was a first step toward creating a Palestinian state.

Mr. Shahal said his plan consisted of a "security area" along the West Bank, though not necessarily at the pre-1967 Middle East war border. He said the zone would be flexible. Declaring it a closed

area would also weighing stiff penalties for those caught giving rides to Palestinians without permits into Israel, such as confiscating their cars.

## Jordanians split over contacts

(Continued from page 12)

But little has changed in the region to strengthen advocates of normalisation.

Israel's 1993 peace deal with the Palestinians is almost a year behind schedule and, although U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's latest visit secured a resumption of direct Israeli-Syrian peace talks, wide differences remain.

The state has taken a hard line, barring fiery preachers from mosques, banning anti-peace rallies

and demonstrations, and taking several leftist newspaper editors to court.

It says the professional associations' ban on contacts is illegal because it violates the spirit of the treaty that became law when Parliament endorsed it last November.

But the government does not want to push too hard in a society where many of Jordan's four million people are of Palestinian origin and still see Israel as occupying their land.

## Turkish forces push into Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

of the operation to the multi-national force, based at Incirlik air base in southern Turkey, which is charged with protecting the safe zone.

The Turkish foreign ministry said leaders of the two main rival Kurdish groups fighting against the Iraqi regime, and against each other, had been informed of the offensive.

But it said Turkey had no intention of taking sides in fighting the two groups, the KDP of Massoud Barzani, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan of Jalal Talabani.

It was the biggest Turkish military offensive against the PKK since 1992, when almost 2,500 rebels were killed.

The push into Iraq by the

## Qatar to base equipment — Perry

(Continued from page 12)

food and medicine.

The communiqué made no mention of recent urgings by Qatar and Oman to ease the sanctions on Iraq to alleviate the suffering of its 18 million people.

The ministers instead blamed the Iraqi regime for the hardships being endured by Iraqis, pointing to Baghdad's refusal to accept a U.N. offer for a one-time sale of Iraqi oil worth \$1.6 billion to help provide badly needed

army, which has a powerful position in Turkish politics, also followed a week of political unrest in Istanbul involving moderate Alawite Muslims and trouble in Germany, where police suspect PKK separatists are behind a wave of firebomb attacks against Turkish-owned property in that country.

Turkey has repeatedly warned Iraqi Kurds against giving shelter to PKK rebels.

The Turkish military has carried out several air and land raids against PKK camps in the region that Ankara says are used for cross-border raids.

In early March, Turkish troops were spotted in the border region with northern Iraq.

## Ali Mahdi ready to meet Aideed

(Continued from page 1)

MOGADISHU (AF) — North Mogadishu warlord Muhammed Ali Aideed is ready to talk to his rival south of the capital, Muhammed Farah Aideed, to end the conflict.

An Aideed spokesman said a week ago that his faction leaders would meet on Saturday to discuss the future of Somalia, but if it promises to be a discussion.

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"I am ready to meet General Aideed at a meeting, but this must be a fruitful discussion," he said.

"We have signed agreements together, none of them has been implemented," Mr. Ali noted.

Meanwhile, delegations from the Arab League Council and a separate session with their leading Arab allies, Egypt and Syria,

## Israel seen to reimpose siege

(Continued from page 1)

from its South Lebanon occupation zone, but Lebanon refused.

Fishermen in Tyre demanded energetic action by Beirut to end the blockade.

"The blockade is now tougher than before as now we don't even venture more than half a kilometre into the

sea," said Joseph Shaqra, a 42-year-old fisherman with five children.

"We are frightened now and wish the Lebanese government would make contacts with western countries because our situation has worsened... it must move on all levels," he said.

## Gore, Mubarak launch economic partnership

CAIRO (AFP) — U.S. Vice President Al Gore and Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak Monday launched an economic partnership aimed at boosting private sector ties between the two countries.

President Mubarak and Mr. Gore said in a statement after a meeting that they shared "a desire to enhance the already deep and close lateral relationship which exists between their two countries."

They recognised the "importance of stronger Egyptian economic growth," as they outlined an eight-point plan for the partnership.

Mr. Mubarak hailed the partnership as a "new chapter in the history of U.S.-Egypt relations," while Mr. Gore said it was the "beginning of a new productive base" in their ties.

U.S. President Bill Clinton's administration was committed to maintaining the current level of U.S. aid to Egypt "through the fiscal year 1996 which is under discussion now," said Mr. Gore.

Egypt is second only to the United States as a recipient of U.S. aid, at a level \$2.1 billion a year.

"We don't expect the aid to stay forever," said Mr. Mubarak. "We know that it will come some day, it will be reduced, we have no problem for that, we understand it very well."

he semi-official Cairo

newspaper Al Ahram explained that "the new partnership and an increase of U.S. investment in Egypt will allow aid to be replaced."

The first meeting of a high-level joint committee for economic cooperation to steer the partnership and made up of cabinet-level officials from both countries was to be held Monday.

Three sub-committees were also to begin work at

Three

## Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

### CBJ clears way for setting up new bank for exports

\*\* THE CENTRAL Bank of Jordan (CBJ) agreed to license a new specialised bank to be called "Export and Finance Bank." The new bank, which will focus on encouraging and financing exports, will have a JD 20 million capital with half of the equity covered by the founders. The CBJ approval was conditional upon the founders pledging to keep their investments for no less than three years and upon the public sector and public institutions holding another portion, that should not be less than 20 per cent, of the capital.

The founding committee includes: Dr. Ziyad Mohammad Fariz, Mohammad Saleh Al Hourani, Ali Khalidoun Al Housari and Elia Costandi Naqul. Other key founders are: Dar Al Hikma for Investment, the Jordan Loan Guarantee Company, the Middle East Insurance, Jordan-French Insurance, the Jordan Wood Industries (JWICO), Sabaii Musher Company, Jordan Insurance, the United Industries Company and other economic bodies.

According to studies done on the export sector, only 50 big exporters are benefiting from the special export facilities provided by the Central Bank and the commercial banks whereas there are over 600 Jordanian exporters in the Kingdom. A further indication to the need for an export bank was cited in the figures of the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) which showed that the IDB had only extended JD 26 million in credits for exports in 1992. The figure was translated to be "in no way" corresponding to the overall required level (Al Aswad).

\*\* A NUMBER of former members of Parliament submitted a memorandum to the speaker of the House requesting him to obtain a pension increase for them similar to that given to retired civil and military personnel. They said they did not have a chance to get a "minister pension" and were not able to return to their seats in Parliament and, as such, would like to benefit from His Majesty's gesture of a pension raise (Al Dustour).

\*\* THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS Corporation decided to lower charges on international telephone calls made on official public holidays. The lower charges, which will cover the whole day, will be the same as those charged during night hours. Effective April 1, the public holidays comprise: Labour Day (May 1), Independence Day (May 25), Army Day (June 10), the King's Accession to the Throne (Aug. 11) and the King's birthday (Nov. 14) (Al Ra'i).

\*\* A ROYAL Decree approved an amendment to the insurance law under which foreign companies wishing to operate in Jordan must provide a deposit to guarantee its honouring of obligations before starting business. The deposit for the foreign company must be at least double the deposit of a local company (Al Aswad).

\*\* THE BOARD of directors of the Arab Bank PLC is recommending to the general assembly the distribution of JD 15.4 million in dividends or 35 per cent at a rate of JD 3.5 per share. The Arab Bank Group recorded a JD 141.2 million net profit last year whereas the net profit of the Arab Bank PLC amounted to JD 70.5 million, 18.5 per cent above the 1993 net profit.

The Arab Bank Group had total assets of JD 20,470 million whereas the assets of Arab Bank PLC stood at JD 11,232 million at the end of year (Al Dustour).

## UAE banks make record profits in 1994

ABU DHABI (AFP) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) banks made record profits in 1993 due to a surge in credits to trade and other sectors and an increase in interest rates, the central bank has said.

The instructions stipulated that the 19 national banks and 28 foreign units must increase their capital to reach a minimum adequacy of 10 per cent, higher than the eight per cent floor set by the Bank for International Settlement (BIS).

The guidelines for banks worldwide, outlined by the BIS's Basle Committee, were designed to ensure all banks have enough funds to deal with any crisis.

At least six UAE banks have boosted their capital to upgrade adequacy, the ratio between shareholders equity and assets. Other banks are planning to follow suit as the instructions also set a ceiling on lending.

The increases boosted the combined shareholders equity, which includes the capital and provisions, to 18.3 billion dirhams (\$4.98 billion) at the end of 1994 from 15.9 billion dirhams (\$4.33 billion) at the end of 1993, according to the central bank statement.

Credits rose to 72.5 billion dirhams (\$19.7 billion) from 63.4 billion dirhams (\$17.27 billion) and deposits to 105.9 billion dirhams (\$28.8 billion) from 100.5 billion dirhams (\$27.38 billion). This boosted

overall assets to 145.5 billion dirhams (\$39.6 billion) from around 138.2 billion dirhams (\$37.6 billion).

Bankers said trade and construction benefited most from the credits extended during 1994 as they have remained the fastest growing sectors. They noted that the two sectors accounted for nearly 45 per cent of the total loans.

"Most banks have made record earnings over the past three years due to an upsurge in credits, their main activity. They are expected to perform even better this year as indications point to continued upturn in the trade and building sectors in the region," a UAE bank manager told AFP.

"Another reason is that the interest rates on the U.S. dollars increased sharply last year. This benefitted many banks as a large part of their assets are based abroad, mainly in bank deposits," he added.

The statement said the central bank board approved applications by some international banks and financial institutions to open representative offices in the UAE. It did not name them but bankers said most of them were Western.

The bank has policy of halting licences for full branches by new foreign banks on the ground that the UAE is already an overbanked country given its small population of two million.

## Western oilmen clamour for Iraqi crude

BAGHDAD (R) — Western oil executives are holding talks in Iraq to finalise deals that could be activated when sanctions on Iraq are eased or lifted, Iraqi oil sources and diplomats said Monday.

"They now want to remain undercover. Deals reached will remain dormant until something is done about the embargo," said one diplomat with close contacts in Iraq's oil industry.

Iraq has the world's second biggest proven oil reserves after Saudi Arabia. The United Nations imposed sanctions on Iraq soon after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Iraqi forces were driven out of Kuwait in 1991 but the sanctions can be lifted only when the U.N. Security Council is satisfied that Baghdad complied with all Gulf war-related resolutions.

The diplomat said the French firm Total was close to reaching an agreement to develop a giant oilfield in southern Iraq with a capacity to produce 400,000 barrels per day (b/d) when sanctions are lifted.

The strike is starting to take effect. There is a worsening of the oil because of problems in the desalter units," he said.

Production levels remain steady but the salt content is not normal. If they want to solve this problem, they will have to lower production levels," he added.

Oilmen who normally work eight hours a day say they have been put on 12-hour shifts to make up for the loss of manpower, and maintenance men are being used to operate production units.

The oilmen said operations involving storage tanks had been rearranged because of the strike.

Asked to comment on press reports that support for the strike was growing, Mr. Shadouki said 800 people were on strike in the production department and 300 were on strike in the maritime export.

Another French firm, Elf Aquitaine, is linked to talks on the 600,000 b/d Majnoon field, which Iraq says has reserves of 38 billion barrels.

Iraqi oil circles are watching closely what Western oil firms would do following an executive order from President Bill Clinton banning U.S. firms from developing oilfields in Iran.

### Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo American Bank

Financial Markets		Jordan Times	
in co-operation with		Cairo American Bank	
U.S. Dollar in International Markets			
Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close	
Sterling Pound	1.5140	1.5810**	
Deutsche Mark	1.3867	1.3951	
Swiss Franc	1.1505	1.1620**	
French Franc	4.9593	4.9825**	
Japanese Yen	89.70	89.45	
European Currency Unit	1.2475	1.2052**	
** London Opening & Mid 12.00 GMT			
Buroverseity Interest Rates	Date: 20/3/1995		
Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS 12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.87	6.08	6.18 6.50
Sterling Pound	6.00	6.25	6.81 7.50
Deutsche Mark	4.62	4.75	4.87 5.25
Swiss Franc	5.37	5.37	5.68 5.81
French Franc	6.00	6.00	7.87 7.87
Japanese Yen	1.06	1.05	1.05 1.07
European Currency Unit	7.86	7.86	7.86 7.86
Interest: W/ 10% for accounts exceeding U.S. Interest Equivalent or equivalent.			
Freight Rates	Date: 20/3/1995		
Metal	USD/ton	JD/Gm*	Mid
Gold	382.70	7.10	Silver 6.69 6.10
* 21 Karat			
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin	Date: 20/3/1995		
Currency	Bid	Offer	
U.S. Dollar	0.6870	0.6890	
Sterling Pound	1.0859	1.0913	
Deutsche Mark	0.4995	0.4950	
Swiss Franc	0.5937	0.5967	
French Franc	0.1384	0.1391	
Japanese Yen	0.7675	0.7713	
Dutch Guilder	0.4389	0.4411	
Swedish Krona	6.6666	6.6666	
Italian Lira	0.0394	0.0396	
For 100			
Other Currencies	Date: 20/3/1995		
Currency	Bid	Offer	
Bahrain Dinar	1.8070	1.8190	
Lebanese Lira	0.041715	0.042830	
Saudi Riyal	0.1128	0.1159	
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3100	2.3400	
Qatari Riyal	0.1175	0.1185	
Egyptian Pound	0.1960	0.2100	
Oman Riyal	1.7600	1.7910	
UAE Dirham	0.1866	0.1876	
Greek Drachma	0.2745	0.3250	
Cypriot Pound	1.4445	1.5550	
For 100			
LONDON EXCHANGE RATES	Date: 20/3/1995		
U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.4100/10	Canadian dollar	
1.4000/10	Deutschmarks		
1.5702/12	Dutch guilders		
1.1626/36	Swiss francs		
28.90/94	Belgian francs		
4.9865/15	French francs		
1743.6/8.6	Italian lire		
89.49/58	Japanese yen		
7.2950/50	Swedish crowns		
6.2710/60	Norwegian crowns		
5.6291/41	Danish crowns		
One sterling	\$1.5790/00		
One ounce of gold	3382.55/382.95		

### LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs 1.4100/10 1.4000/10 1.5702/12 1.1626/36 28.90/94 4.9865/15 1743.6/8.6 89.49/58 7.2950/50 6.2710/60 5.6291/41 One sterling \$1.5790/00 One ounce of gold 3382.55/382.95



Mr. Salim Sa'ad, Ireland's Honorary Consul in Jordan, with Irish Ladies of Amman committee members. From left, Helen Kawa, Leila Savalisa, Edel Barghouti and Marwa Tash, during the St. Patrick's Day celebration.

Irish celebrate St. Patrick's Day

AMMAN — On the occasion of Ireland's national day, St. Patrick's, the recently formed Irish Ladies of Amman celebrated by organising a dinner ball at the Amman Marriott Hotel Friday evening. The Irish musical group Joe McCarthy's was especially flown to Jordan to perform on this occasion. Attending the function were members of the Irish community in Jordan and their friends.

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## Juventus extend lead over Parma Liverpool dent Manchester United's hopes

PARIS (Agencies) — European football's top clubs had a mixed return to the bread and butter of domestic football this weekend.

UEFA Cup semi-finalists Juventus managed to stretch their lead in Italy to five points over Parma, and European Cup semi-finalists Paris Saint German beat Nancy to reach the French Cup semi-finals.

And Spanish league leaders Real Madrid stretched their advantage to five points over Barcelona.

But Dortmund, runaway leaders of the Bundesliga at the winter break, crashed to a 3-0 defeat to fellow UEFA Cup semi-finalists Bayer Leverkusen on Saturday as their title campaign headed off the rails.

In Italy, Giancarlo Viali hit his 12th league goal for Juventus this season against nine-man Cremonese as they stretched their lead to five points with a 1-0 win.

Viali, well served by Roberto Baggio, scored in the 69th minute, moments after Enrico Chiesa hit the post for Cremonese. Cremonese were reduced to nine men when Stefano De Agostinini and Corrado Verdelli were sent off.

It was a day of celebration for Juventus coach Marcello Lippi, who extended his contract for two seasons just

before the match.

Juventus thanked Reggiana midfielder Igor Simuntenkov for giving them further breathing space after his equaliser in a 2-2 draw against second-placed Parma.

Missimiliano Esposito opened the scoring Reggiana before Fernando Couto and Lorenzo Minetti hit back to give Parma a 2-1 lead.

Third placed AC Milan, though eight points behind Parma, continued their salvaging of the 1994/95 season with a 3-0 victory at 10-man Sampdoria. Milan, who rested Franco Zucchi, were helped by Roberto Mancini's sending off in the 53rd minute.

Earlier in the season, AC Milan were in mid-table, out of the Italian Cup, virtually out of the European Cup, and had been beaten by Veleno Sarsfield in the Intercontinental Cup.

Marcos Simone, who hit the winner in last Sunday's victory over Padova, scored his eighth goal in four matches after 10 minutes.

Then Demetrio Albertini scored further goals in the 71st and 90 minutes from set pieces — the first from a free-kick and the second from a penalty.

Unbeaten for six months, German leaders Dortmund have now lost twice in two weeks.

Worse still, they would have been knocked off the top of the table had second-placed Werder Bremen not beaten 2-0 by Borussia Moenchengladbach on Friday night.

Dortmund, who have been dogged by injury and on Thursday lost Swiss goal ace Stephan Chapuisat for the rest of the season, still have 33 points to Bremen's 32.

Paris Saint German hosts Marseille and Strasbourg hosts Metz in the French Cup semi-finals after the four clubs won this weekend.

After toppling Johan Cruyff's Barcelona on Wednesday night in the European Champions Cup, and had been beaten by Veleno Sarsfield in the Intercontinental Cup.

Brazilian defender Ricardo, returning after three weeks out through injury, was the man of the match — heading in both PSG's goals.

Metz beat Mulhouse 2-0 in Saturday's other Cup tie.

Irish international Tony Cascarino and Joel Cantona, brother of Manchester United bad boy Eric, put second division Olympique Marseille into the semi's with a 2-0 win over Chateauroux on Friday night.

In Friday's other tie, Bordeaux had three men including their goalkeeper sent off

before finally capitulating 2-0 to Strasbourg in extra time.

In Spain, Real Madrid beat Espanol 1-0 on Sunday to move five points clear of Barcelona, held 0-0 at the Nou Camp stadium by Valencia.

Madrid, without fever victims Michael Laudrup and Fernando Hierro, nevertheless had a tough time in their win.

Chilean Ivan Zamorano scored his 21st goal of the season on the stroke of half-time, and keeper Buyo, playing his 500th match in the first division, kept a clean sheet.

Barcelona, without injured Josep Guardiola and Hristo Stoichkov dominated Valencia, but were not able to seriously bother former Bar-

celona keeper Andoni Zubizarreta.

And Valencia, coach by former Brazilian boss Carlos Alberto Parreira, had the best chance of the match when Russian Oleg Salenko hit the post in the fifth minute.

Betis Sevilla, promoted this season, took advantage of Deportivo Coruna's 1-0 loss to Atletico Madrid to take third spot on goal difference. Betis beat Campostela 1-0.

Meanwhile Athletic Bilbao coach Javier Irureta resigned on Sunday, 24 hours after his side's 2-0 home defeat against Sevilla.

He will be replaced by second team coach Jose Maria Amorrua.

## CSKA chief: Players were poisoned in Greece

"It was a case of premeditated poisoning. It is beyond dispute," CSKA chairman Mikhail Reznikov told Reuters by telephone.

"We are awaiting the official results of the tests due out tomorrow to make a formal statement but for us there is no doubt we were poisoned," Reznikov said.

Reznikov said he himself had a thumping headache after taking just one sip from a bottle of water provided by the organisers.

Five CSKA players were taken to hospital shortly before last Thursday's European Champion Clubs' Cup quarter-final against Olympiakos after collapsing with spasms and dizziness apparently caused by drinking water.

But he refused to be specific about who might have been behind the incident.

"We do not tend to blame our hosts for it. All bottles were properly sealed and

they themselves have as many enemies in Greece as they have friends. It is big money which is the main thing there," he said.

CSKA players Igor Kudin, Sergei Panov, Igor Manganov, Evgeny Karasev and Andrei Kornev watched the match on television while recovering in hospital.

Their absence from the game meant CSKA had no substitutes. At one point they fielded only three players when two were fouled out.

A senior Olympiakos official said on Sunday that the club would not comment until the results of blood and urine tests were known. The results were expected Tuesday.

## Sampras hurries to win, eager to watch Michael Jordan's return

KEY BISCAYNE (Agencies) — Pete Sampras, eager to watch the telecast of Michael Jordan's return to the basketball, hurried past Derrick Rostango in the second round Sunday at the Lipton Championships.

Stefan Edberg and Richard Krajicek lost their opening matches, leaving just seven of the top 11 men's seeds alive. Todd Martin and Michael Stich lost Saturday.

Sampras, the tournament's two-time defending champion, completed his 6-3, 6-2 victory over Rostango before 1:15 p.m.

"It feels pretty good," the top-ranked Sampras said. "Because now I'm going to go watch Michael Jordan play."

On a sunny, windy day, the sixth-seeded Krajicek was eliminated 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 by Paul Kilderry, an Australian qualifier ranked No. 19. Edberg, seeded 11th, lost to German Karsten Braasch 6-3, 7-6 (7-1), 6-3.

for me," Edberg said. "He is tough to play because he has a very weird game. He takes a lot of pace off the ball and makes it very hard when it is windy out there."

Australian Mark Philippoussis, at 18 the youngest player in the men's draw, advanced by beating Paul Haarhuis 7-6 (7-4), 6-3. All seven Australians in the 96-player men's field remained alive.

"The past few years there have been a lot of questions asked — 'why aren't Australian tennis players producing results like we used to?'" said Kilderry, a 21-year-old Perth native. "Maybe it is starting to turn around."

Qualifer Paul Kilderry of Australia, ranked 19th, upset sixth-seeded and 10th-ranked Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands 6-3, 3-6, 6-2.

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	5 of 4.			
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	5 3	Pass	Pass	Pass
	5 Q 10 9 8	Pass	Pass	Pass
	5 Q 10 9 8	Pass	Pass	Pass
	5 Q 10 9 8	Pass	Pass	Pass
	5 Q 10 9 8	Pass	Pass	Pass
	5 Q 10 9 8	Pass	Pass	Pass
SOUTH	7	Pass	Pass	Pass
	5 4 3	Pass	Pass	Pass
	5 4 3	Pass	Pass	Pass
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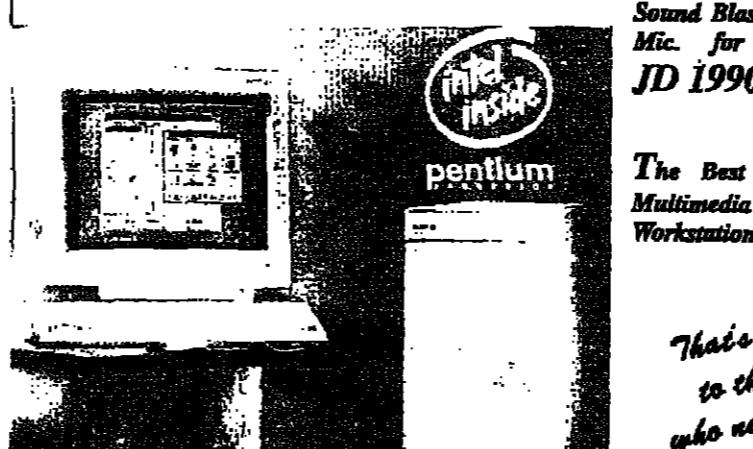
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## Russia attacks NATO 'hurry' to expand east

PARIS (Agencies) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev on Monday attacked the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) for "hurrying" to expand eastwards as a conference of 52 nations here launched an European stability pact aimed at stifling potential conflict in former communist Eastern Europe.

Mr. Kozyrev told the conference that the moves would create "new lines of division" within Europe and said NATO should not be expanded eastwards "for several years" to allow time for the Western alliance's Partnership for Peace programme to "find solutions" to Europe's security problems.

Opening the conference, French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur called for "a new security relationship with Russia," saying the European Union and NATO should avoid antagonising Moscow.

Mr. Balladur said the European Union (EU) favoured enlargement of the Western European Union (WEU) — the EU's military arm — and of NATO to take in Eastern and Central European countries, but that the process should be "carefully prepared."

He said the aim should be to maintain NATO's effectiveness while avoiding raising "needless antagonisms." The operation has to be accompanied "by a new security relationship with Russia and doubtless, confidence measures," he said.

Mr. Kozyrev told the con-

ference that NATO's plans to take in countries such as Poland and Hungary were dangerous and that greater efforts should be made to include all nations in security structures.

"Why rush things if we run the risk of creating new lines of division?" he asked, repeating Moscow's often-stated fears that it would be left isolated.

"Whatever one may think of NATO, it's still a military alliance which was created when Europe was divided. It should be replaced by a new model based on comprehensive security."

Mr. Kozyrev is due to meet U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Geneva on Thursday and Russia's troubled relations with NATO are expected to top the agenda.

Enshrined in the pact will be a treaty signed here Sunday by Hungary and Slovakia, which is home to 600,000 Hungarians, and about 100 other lesser agreements.

Moscow refused last December to sign the partnership deal with the alliance because of its opposition to NATO enlargement.

The gap between NATO's very active moves to studying potential enlargement and its passive attitude in developing this new model of comprehensive security is a very wide one and it could be dangerous," he told the meeting.

Signing the pact will be a condition for the admission of Central and Eastern European countries to the EU.

The foreign ministers and government leaders from across the continent had only just approved the pact, when Russia raised one of the most serious security problems facing Europe.

Mr. Kozyrev told the con-



KING MEETS KALMIKIA LEADER: His Majesty King Hussein on Monday received at the Royal Court the president of the Russian autonomous republic of Kalmykia, Ium Saltaev (Petra photo)

## Islamists dominate student elections

By Taleb Hiyyasat  
*Special to the Jordan Times*

AMMAN — The Islamic students' faction at the University of Jordan was headed for victory Monday night after less than 10,000 undergraduates voted to elect a one-year student council.

The results this year will not be any different from last year's. The Islamic-dominated council of last year will retain the same formula, according to a poll recently carried out at the university.

Before the elections took place, members of the former council issued a statement in which they accused the university's administration of carrying out "dubious and unacceptable actions" in order to rig the outcome of the elections.

The statement claimed that the administration had searched the students' dormitory main gate and carried out full investigation to find out whom they were going to elect.

The statement called on university students to stand against "such practices and external interferences that aim at changing the elections' outcome."

A large number of students denied that these actions took place and said that there had been no inspection or any unusual practices. Some students questioned the motives behind levelling such charges and said they have no right to issue it under the name of the students' council when the council was considered as dissolved.

Two hundred and twenty-six candidates from the 13 faculties are competing for council's 80 seats.

### Muta elections

Students at the civilian wing of Mut'a University will Tuesday elect the university's students' federation council.

Some 190 candidates are vying for the council's 67 seats.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Prince Abdullah meets Yemeni minister

ABU DHABI (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein on Monday received in his residence in Abu Dhabi the Yemeni minister of defence who is in the United Arab Emirates to attend an international defence exhibition. Prince Abdullah and the Yemeni official discussed Jordanian-Yemeni relations in various fields. The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal.

### Princess Alia attends Qatar equestrian event

DOHA (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein on Monday commanded the Qatar equestrian championship festival and praised efforts exerted by the organisers of the event under way in Doha. Princess Alia told a press conference the festival can be considered as an important step aimed at developing the sport in the Arab World. The King's private chamberlain, Prince Al Ben Nayef, who is also in Doha to attend the festival, said the event was a good chance for horse breeders to meet and establish strong links. Prince Alia said festivals held in Jordan and Qatar help strengthen ties between the two countries and develop the sport.

### Vaccination campaign gets ahead

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 442,247 children under five were vaccinated against polio on Saturday and Sunday, representing 65 per cent of the age group targeted by a national polio immunisation campaign which started Saturday. The Ministry of Health said. It said of the targeted age group, 50 per cent were vaccinated in Amman, 99 per cent in Madaba, 66 per cent in Zarqa, 80 per cent in Balqa, 72 per cent in Irbid, 84 per cent in Ajloun, 85 per cent in Jerash, 82 per cent in Mafrqa, 70 per cent in Karak, 86 per cent in Tafleah, 80 per cent in Maan and 67 per cent in Aqaba. The six-day campaign is organised by the ministry of health in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

### Alatas receives Jordanian message

JAKARTA (Petra) — Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas on Monday received Jordanian Ambassador to Indonesia Lu'ai Al Khashman, who conveyed to him a message from Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti on bilateral relations and coordinating the two countries' stands within the context of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on several regional and international issues. Foreign ministers of NAM's member states will meet in Indonesia, which currently chairs the movement, on April 25.

### Arabs say no joint chambers with Israel

CAIRO (AP) — Arab chamber of commerce will not set up ties with Israel, the head of the Syrian-based federation said, in a sign that Middle East peace may not usher in greater trade. Israeli officials have hoped that peace with its Arab neighbours would break decades of economic isolation in the region. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has suggested that Arab chambers of commerce set up joint programmes with Israel to encourage trade. But Burhan Al Dajani, head of the Federation of Arab Chambers of Commerce, said no joint chamber would be set up. The group also will not permit separate Arab chambers to set up joint programmes without the federation's permission, Mr. Dajani told the Arabic newspaper Al Hayat on Monday. The federation groups the chambers of commerce and industry from all Arab countries. Its executive committee met Sunday at the Arab League's headquarters in Cairo. Mr. Dajani, a Palestinian businessman, said the group urged the creation of a development bank for Israel and Arab countries only after treaties were reached with the rest of the Arab World.

### Sudan bans lavish receptions

KHARTOUM (AP) — No more gifts of gold or carved wood, imported food or drink. Sudan's once-lavish government receptions will now be austere occasions, apparently to save money. Sudan's leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir on Monday banned expensive receptions for government officials and foreign diplomats, saying they contradicted the policies of his Islamic-oriented government. Gen. Bashir said the receptions would offer cheaper, locally produced foods and drinks. Expensive gifts of gold or carved wood will be prohibited. Lavish government receptions are traditional in many Arab and African countries. Sudan is Africa's largest country, but one of the poorest in the world.

### Egypt's liberal party team meets Iraqis

BAGHDAD (R) — A delegation from Egypt's small Liberal Party is in Baghdad exploring ways to bring Iraq back to the Arab fold, a senior party official said on Monday. "We are here for Arab reconciliation." Hulmi Ahmad Salim, a senior party official, told Reuters. He said the party's head, Mustafa Kamel Murad, met senior Iraqi officials and was told that Baghdad was ready to "open a new chapter" in its relations with Arab states. The Liberal Party delegation arrived in Baghdad on Sunday. Mr. Salim said the party was against the "unjust embargo" imposed on Iraq for invading Kuwait in 1990. "The steadfastness of the Iraqi leadership and its patience under sanctions are the subject of world's admiration," the government daily Al Jumhouriya quoted Mr. Murad as saying.

## Gore backs nuke-free Mideast, but will not pressure Israel

CAIRO (Agencies) — Skirting a dispute with Egypt, U.S. Vice-President Al Gore on Monday endorsed the idea of banning nuclear weapons in the Middle East but refused to pressure Israel to give up its suspected arsenal.

Mr. Gore held 2½ hours of talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who is leading an Arab campaign demanding that Israel allow international inspection of its weapons and sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The United States is pushing for an indefinite extension of the 25-year-old treaty but Egypt and some other developing nations are threatening not to sign unless Israel does.

"We support universal adherence to the treaty and we believe it should be extended indefinitely and unconditionally," Mr. Gore said at an outdoor news conference with Mr. Mubarak at the Iftahiyah palace.

"We do not believe that (the treaty) extension should be linked to whether other states join the treaty or to a specific timeframe for achieving our broadly supported non-proliferation goals in the Middle East," he said.

Cairo is the first stop on a five-country trip that also will take Mr. Gore to Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Israel. He will also meet in Jericho with Pales-

tine Liberation Organisation chief Yasser Arafat. Israel has never admitted that it possesses nuclear weapons but it is believed to have 200 warheads. It has resisted demands for opening its facilities to inspection, arguing it must keep up its guard against potential adversaries Iran, Iraq and Libya.

Mr. Gore said Egypt and Israel are having "a new constructive dialogue" over their concerns about weapons of mass destruction.

The Egyptian government daily Al Akbar charged Monday that the United States "has simply sided with Israel" against Egypt in the nuclear row.

"But things don't stop there, because we have also been surprised by intense American pressure to force Egypt to abandon its position," it added in an editorial by its editor-in-chief, Galal Dawidar.

Mr. Dawidar said pressure was exerted by U.S. officials on their Egyptian counterparts and through an American press campaign against Egypt.

President Mubarak, quoted by Monday's press, told a legal committee monitoring the row that "Egypt will not bow to any sort of pressure."

Meanwhile, the six Gulf Arab states urged Israel Monday to join the NPT after a two-day meeting of their foreign ministers in Saudi Arabia.

The Gulf Cooperation

Commission, grouping Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, said in a statement that "a fair and comprehensive peace will never be secured in the region without security and balance (of forces) being guaranteed."

Mr. Gore and Mr. Mubarak spoke hopefully about the potential for progress in peace talks and condemned Sunday night's attack that killed two Israelis in the West Bank city of Hebron.

This attack emphasises that the survival of the peace process hinges directly on the determination of the parties to live up to their prospective responsibilities," Mr. Gore said. "We agreed that it has softened the resolve of the United States and Egypt to do all we can to help bring the peace process to a successful conclusion."

Mr. Mubarak agreed. "We are determined to continue to work together in order to enhance the changes for achieving meaningful progress on the road to peace," he said. "We are fighting the forces of despair, extremism and violence."

Mr. Gore's trip began a campaign that gives him a special role in U.S. relations with Egypt, with him and Mr. Mubarak serving as leaders of a committee to foster economic and scientific cooperation (see inside).

Students at the civilian wing of Mut'a University will Tuesday elect the university's students' federation council.

Some 190 candidates are vying for the council's 67 seats.

AMMAN — More than four months after Jordan ended its 46-year struggle with Israel, its citizens remain deeply divided over how much contact they want with people they had been taught to vilify.

Many intellectuals, opposition politicians and ordinary Jordanians are banting to keep the Oct. 26 treaty a piece of paper rather than the route to full political, economic and cultural links.

"The state can do what it wants," said Kamal Nasser, head of Jordan's influential Bar Association. "But it cannot interfere in people's feelings, force them to change attitudes and convince them Israel is a friendly state while it continues to occupy Arab lands and harm Palestinians."

"People simply do not want to deal with Israel... no law will force them to do so," he told Reuters, re-

flecting the view of that section of society which believes peace with the "Zionist enemy" is far-fetched.

His group is among 12 professional associations which have threatened to dismiss any of their 80,000 members who have contacts with Israel.

The Jordanian Writers' Association is considering expelling 10 members, including two cabinet ministers, for "normalisation activities."

A vocal Islamic Action Front-led coalition of 11 political parties is preparing to hold a national conference to fight normalisation of ties with Israel.

Many ordinary Jordanians say they do not want to visit Israel and leading business people say publicly they want no dealings. But those who want contact fear criticism.

"It is up to the individual to decide on normalisation now that the state of war with Israel has legally ended and it became like any

other country with whom we have relations," said comedian Hisham Yanis.

He stars in "Welcome Normalisation," a political satire that opened in Amman last month and has drawn audiences that included King Hussein.

"In the play we are trying to reflect what is going on inside people's minds on normalisation, whether positive, negative, hesitant, supporter or opponent," Mr. Yanis said.

In one scene a man refused to talk to his cousin, an Arab Israeli who stayed in Israel after its creation in 1948. "Don't you dare normalise with him. He has an Israeli passport," yells the actor.

Another scene accuses the official press of raising unrealistic expectations of peace dividends: a poor Egyptian and a Sudanese have just arrived looking for "money which they heard was everywhere on the streets after Jordan made peace."

Mr. Yanis and co-writer

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## Qatar to store U.S. equipment — Perry

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies)

The United States has for the first time received permission to base military equipment in Qatar in a bid to defend Gulf states against Iran and Iraq. U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry said Monday.

Qatar has allowed Washington to deploy enough equipment for a brigade, which numbers around 4,000 troops. Mr. Perry told a news conference during a visit to Kuwait, which was freed from Iraqi occupation in the 1991 U.S.-led Gulf war.

The equipment will complement the increase in U.S. material sent to Kuwait since last October when Iraq massed troops along the border of the emirate in what many feared would be a repeat of the 1990 invasion.

"Last October we had half of a brigade" worth of equipment in Kuwait, said Mr. Perry who visited U.S. troops during the crisis. "Now we have a full brigade. In addition to that we have authorisation to move our second brigade in Qatar."

Mr. Perry, who arrived here from Saudi Arabia where he began a Gulf tour, said "I will discuss the arrival of the brigade" when he goes to Qatar.

"Iraq represents an immediate threat. We consider Iran as a potential future threat," he said.

The Iraqis "have been re-building their defence industrial capabilities," he told a news conference at an air base here. "Since last October they showed some indications of not having learned a very effective lesson."

Washington hoped to maintain its armada of warships in the Gulf and Red Sea as well as warplanes at bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, he said.

"We have important long-term security interests and we will work with the Saudis and Kuwaitis and other governments in the region to provide security and stability," he said.

"The sanctions against Iraq are effective 70 to 80 per cent which is pretty good. They have chosen to rebuild their forces" at their own people's expense, he said.

He said Washington will continue to back maintaining U.N. sanctions until Iraq complies with all U.N. resolutions ending the Gulf war, including divulging details on weapons and returning Kuwaiti prisoners and property.

Mr. Perry said in Riyadh earlier that Iran posed a threat to Gulf Arab countries and that its weapons deployment in the region went beyond its defensive needs.

He said Iran was reinforcing military positions at the mouth of the Gulf across from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) by building up its forces on several islands.

Iran is locked in a dispute with the UAE over sovereignty of three islands near the Strait of Hormuz at the entrance to the Gulf, the transit point for a fifth of the world's oil.

The United States charged last month that Iran had deployed anti-aircraft missiles on the islands.

Tehran retorted by stressing its defence concerns against possible Israeli threats and defending its right to carry out "routine" military exercises on its own territory.

Meanwhile foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates — urged Iraq to comply in full with the U.N. resolutions.

But they sidestepped Qatari and Omani calls to ease sanctions for humanitarian reasons.

The foreign ministers declared in a joint communiqué issued after a two-day policy coordination conference that Iraq "complete implementation of resolutions of international legitimacy... and desist from any aggressive or provocative deeds" in line with U.N. Security Council Resolution 949.

The ministers specifically stressed that Iraq must release some 600 Kuwaitis and restore property taken from the emirate.